

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05622 131452Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 /046 W  
-----025543 140014Z /61  
R 131401Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9271  
INFO USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5622

FROM WILEY

DEPT FOR NEA/ARN

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ASEC, IZ  
SUBJECT: DETENTION OF LOCAL EMPLOYEE

REF: BAGHDAD 1341

1. IN VIEW OF LENGTH OF TIME ABBAS SOUSA HAS BEEN UNDER ARREST, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOW TAKE A SOMEWHAT MORE ACTIVE POSTURE TOWARDS GOI ON GENERAL SUBJECT OF GOI TREATMENT OF USINT LOCAL EMPLOYEES. OUR LOW KEY APPROACH DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE IN HELPING ABBAS.

2. I BELIEVE OUR BEST BET NOW IS TO CONVEY DISCREETLY TO FON MIN IDEA THAT GOI TREATMENT OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF ALL FOREIGN MISSIONS IS GIVING IT A BAD INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS TOP LEADERSHIP OF BAATH PARTY, HAVE SOME CONCERN FOR THEIR INTERNATIONAL IMAGE, AND MAY BE INFLUENCED BY SUCH AN ARGUMENT PROVIDED IT IS CONVEYED IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT OFFEND THEIR SENSITIVITIES OVER THEIR NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 JIDDA 05622 131452Z

3. I SUSPECT FON MIN DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS ZAHAWI IS HIMSELF RATHER CHAGRINED OVER THE TREATMENT OF ABBAS BY THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES. I HAD RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF AN EXIT VISA FOR ABBAS WITH HIM PERSONALLY AND INFORMALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF POSSIBLE SIGNALS THAT GOI COULD SEND TO THE USG IF THEY DECIDED TIME HAD COME FOR SOME IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS. ZAHAWI APPARENTLY FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH MY

SUGGESTION AND IT BACKFIRED WHEN IT REACHED THE SECURITY THUGS. AS DEPT. IS AWARE, IRAQI SECURITY OFFICIALS HAVE HAD IT IN FOR ABBAS FOR SOME TIME BECAUSE OF HIS REFUSAL TO GIVE THEM HIS WHOLEHEARTED COOPERATION IN THEIR OPERATIONS AGAINST OFFICIAL AMERICANS IN IRAQ.

4. WHILE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS MUST ALSO BE CAREFUL TO AVOID ANTAGONIZING SECURITY AUTHORITIES, I HAVE HEARD OF OCCASIONS WHEN THEY HAVE ATTEMPTED TO CURB THE EXCESSES OF THE SECURITY MEN ON THE GROUNDS THAT SUCH BEHAVIOR AFFECTS IRAQ'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION. I BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO ABBAS IF WE COULD GIVE THEM SOME AMMUNITION.

5. I RECOMMEND THAT DEPT. PREPARE LEGAL BRIEF FOR USINT ON PROTECTION OF LOCAL HIRE EMBASSY EMPLOYEES FROM INTIMIDATION OR HARASSMENT, DRAWING ON GENEVA CONVENTION OR ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS OR PRECEDENTS. IF THERE IS SOLID CASE TO BE MADE ON LEGAL GROUNDS, I RECOMMEND THAT MACK CONVEY THIS TO ZAHAWI. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS MIGHT FIND SUCH PRECEDENT USEFUL IN THEIR INTERNAL GOI DEBATES WITH SECURITY AUTHORITIES.

6. I FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT SIGNAL BE SUBTLY CONVEYED TO GOI THROUGH FON MINISTRY THAT I WILL NOT BE REPLACED AS PRINCIPAL OFFICER OF USINT AS LONG AS HARASSMENT OF LOCAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 JIDDA 05622 131452Z

STAFF CONTINUES. I BELIEVE THAT THIS COULD BEST BE DONE INFORMALLY TO ZAHAWI AND NOT IN WRITING.

7. IN REPLYING TO WRITTEN NOTE, I RECOMMEND THAT REPLY BE CONFINED TO A REAFFIRMATION OF OUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT EMBASSY EMPLOYEE WHO HAS NOW BEEN ABSENT WITHOUT EXPLANATION FOR NEARLY TWO MONTHS. I WOULD IGNORE THEIR REFERENCE TO OUR REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF ABBAS'S EMIGRATION SINCE THAT REQUEST WAS NEVER MADE TO GOI FORMALLY OR IN WRITING. IN THIS SITUATION, I WOULD KEEP WRITTEN EXCHANGES TO A MINIMUM AND TRY TO COMMUNICATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ORALLY THROUGH FON MIN OFFICIALS WHO ARE PROBABLY MORE SYMPATHETIC TO OUR POSITION THAN SECURITY OFFICIALS WHO WOULD BE ULTIMATE RECIPIENTS OF A WRITTEN NOTE.

8. AT SOME POINT, IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF BELGIAN AMBASSADOR WERE TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH FON MIN. INVOLVEMENT OF BELGIANS MIGHT HELP EMPHASIZE POINT THAT INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION OF GOI IS INVOLVED.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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